Proceedings of the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore.

READ—

Resolution of the Government of India in the Home Department No. 493—505, dated the 2nd August 1904, regarding examinations in the Persian language.

The Government of India have had under their consideration the question of reforming the examinations in the Persian language which are at present conducted under the rules contained in the Home Department Notification No. I, dated the 2nd January 1880, so as to give them a more practical character. Experience has shown that the present system of examination is not calculated to ensure such a knowledge of the spoken language as it is essential that officers should have in dealing with Persian-speaking people. The Governor General in Council attributes the failure of the present system in this respect largely to the fact that most of the existing text-books are antiquated and do not introduce candidates to modern and colloquial Persian. In order to remedy these defects the Government of India were inclined to abolish, so far as the high proficiency and degree of honor examinations are concerned, the requirement that candidates must be examined in certain prescribed text-books, and to leave it to them to acquire the language in their own way; and to prepare themselves generally for the tests prescribed. It seemed to them that such a reform would, by encouraging a wider reading, conduce to a more healthy knowledge of the language than can be acquired by the constant re-reading of a few selected text-books. With the object of assisting candidates in the choice of their reading, the Governor General in Council proposed to publish a list of typical books and literature suitable in point of difficulty to the character of the high proficiency and Degree of Honor examinations respectively. It was intended, not that the examinations should necessarily be confined to the literature indicated in the list, but that the passages set for translation at either examination should be selected from writings of a standard of difficulty as nearly identical as possible with that of the listed books. The Government of India thought that it would be necessary to retain text-books for the higher standard examination, and the only change which they contemplated making in respect of that examination was the substitution of more modern works for the existing text-books.

2. Upon these proposals the Government of India invited the opinion of the Governments of Madras and Bombay in both of which presidencies examinations in the Persian language are held. Both the Government of Madras and the Government of Bombay have concurred generally in the suggested reform. The latter Government have, however, urged that, in the interests of sound scholarship, candidates for the Degree of Honor test should be required to read in addition to modern works at least two masterpieces (one prose and one poetry) of ancient classical literature. To secure uniformity of standard the Government of Madras recommend that the new rules should declare, either that there should be two sets of papers, one containing questions taken from the books scheduled as typical, and the other from books outside the list, or that all the questions should be set from books outside the list. Upon consideration of these suggestions the Government of India have decided to modify their original proposals by directing (*a*) that the Degree of Honor test shall comprise the whole range of the language and demand a knowledge of classical as well as of modern Persian, and (*b*) that half the passages for translation at the High Proficiency and Degree of Honor examinations shall be selected from the listed works and half from works of a similar standard of difficulty.

After consideration of the various suggestions which they have received as to the literature which should be included in the model list, the Government of India have selected those specified in the annexed schedule as representing the most suitable examples of Persian literature for the purpose in view. A list of the grammars which are recommended as most likely to assist students in their reading has also been included in the schedule.

3. An important part of the examination consists of testing the ability of a candidate in reading and translating manuscript fluently. The Government of India understand that candidates have hitherto been hampered in preparing themselves for this portion of the examination by the difficulty of obtaining satisfactory specimens of Persian correspondence, and they have therefore obtained specimens of correspondence from Teheran and Bushire, which they have caused to be reproduced by photo-zincography. These specimens can be obtained on an application to the marginally noted officers. In other respects the Governor General in Council considers that the present tests should remain unaltered, except that, as regards the high proficiency examination, the passages set for translation from Persian into English should not necessarily be in narrative style.

Secretary to the Board of Examiners, Calcutta.
Ditto ditto Madras.
Secretary to the Civil and Military Examination Committee, Bombay.

4. The only change which will be made in respect of the higher standard examination is the substitution of more modern works for the existing text-books. The following are the works which the Governor General in Council has decided to prescribe in future for this purpose:—

1. A selection (to be made) from the 'Tarikh-i-Sasaniyan.'
2. A selection (to be made) from the 'Safar-Nama-i-Shah-i-Iran.'
3. 'Narrative of Mrs. Hortestet' translated by Itimad-us-Sultana.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to the local Governments and Administrations marginally noted, and to the Military and Foreign Departments of the Government of India.

Madras.
Bombay.
Bengal.
United Provinces.
Punjab.
Burma.
Central Provinces.
Assam.
Coorg.
N. W. F. Province.

Ordered, also that the resolution be published in the *Supplement to the Gazette of India*.

H. H. RISLEY,
Secretary to the Government of India.